

While I agree with many of the positions in this petition--such as increasing the difficulty of the technical exams and allowing Technicians to use digital modes in the Novice subbands--it does not make a compelling case for keeping the Morse code test.

Many of the things that the petition says about the use of Morse code are true. For example, equipment capable of Morse code operation is much simpler than equipment needed for phone operation. And it is true that Morse code signals will get through in conditions that are difficult for phone operation.

None of these points have anything to do with keeping the Morse code test, however. Assuming that amateur licensees will be able to use this mode--even though they may not have had to pass a test--all of these characteristics will still apply, and amateur radio operators can take full advantage of them.

I also find the petition's argument that requiring amateur radio operators to pass a Morse code test encourages experimentation to be misleading. There is just no logical connection between proficiency in Morse code operation and the desire to experiment. In fact, I would think that exactly the opposite is true. Denying an amateur radio license those who have no desire to learn Morse code, or who have trouble learning Morse code, would deter those people from experimenting with electronic circuitry and improving their technical skills.

The current Morse code test is not an indication that an amateur radio operator is proficient in the use of Morse code. Indeed, many licensees simply learn enough to pass the test and then promptly forget it. This does not make them bad operators or take away their technical skills. Those that have a desire to learn Morse code and use that mode of operation will do so, whether or not there is a Morse code test.

As a member of the FISTS CW Club, I enjoy and appreciate the art of Morse code operation. BUT, I don't feel that keeping the test benefits the amateur radio service, nor does it promote the goals for which the service was formed. Now that the World Radio Conference has allowed individual countries to eliminate the Morse code requirement--and many countries have already done so, I think it's time that the FCC do so here in the United States.